

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Mid-Plains Community College is committed to academic integrity and honesty as an essential component of MPCC as an academic institution. All members of MPCC's academic community: administrators, staff, faculty and students, share the responsibility of maintaining that integrity. Violations of academic integrity include acts, such as plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, obtaining unauthorized materials from the internet, allowing others to write or compose your work; or using the work of other students, not citing the original sources, facilitating misconduct, and/or assisting others in actions that are related to these violations of academic integrity. Students who partake in violations of academic integrity at MPCC are subject to sanctions as described below. Students are granted due process and the right to appeal any decision regarding an academic integrity violation.

The Academic Integrity policy will be referenced on all MPCC course syllabi. The reference will include information regarding the location of this policy. It is the responsibility of the student to know and follow MPCC Academic Integrity standards. Ignorance of the MPCC Academic Integrity standards and/or unintentional violation(s) of the standards do not excuse the violation.

Students who have questions about Academic Integrity or the MPCC Academic Integrity policy may direct their questions to any faculty member, Academic Dean or the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Up-to-date contact information for individuals in these positions is available on the MPCC website under faculty and staff contact.

Definitions

Instances of academic integrity violations could include actions such as, but not limited to, those referenced below.

- **Cheating** – Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test, examination or exercise from another student; using or attempting to utilize unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for an academic test, examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage in the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a student; or communication of information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic test, examination or exercise.
- **Fabrication or Falsification** – Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, work, speech, research, test or examination. Falsification is the alteration of information. Fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information.
- **Plagiarism** – Presenting another person's work as one's own (without proper acknowledgement of the source) and submitting examinations, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic works in whole or in part as one's own when such work was prepared by another person or copied from another person. Plagiarism may apply to materials such as, but are not limited to, text, video, audio, images, photographs, websites, electronic materials or other intellectual property.
- **Complicity in Academic Dishonesty** – Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Including instances such as, but not limited to, assisting another student to commit an academic integrity violation or attempting to offer MPCC faculty, staff or administrators bribes or favors as a means

of influencing academic standing and/or grades for themselves or another student.

- **Impermissible Collaboration** – Collaborating on any academic exercise, work, speech, test or examination unless expressly authorized by the faculty member. It is the student's obligation to know if collaboration is permitted.
- **Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work** – Misrepresentation by fabrication an otherwise justifiable excuse such as illness, injury, accident, etc., in order to avoid or delay timely submission of academic work or to avoid or delay the taking of a test or examination.
- **Other** – MPCC faculty may maintain additional academic integrity standards of conduct, such as a policy regarding self-plagiarism, within particular courses or programs. In the case that faculty have additional standards of conduct students will be given prior written notice.

Academic Integrity Violation Sanctions

If a student violates academic integrity expectations within a course at MPCC he or she will be subject to course-level and college-level sanctions, and the violation reported to the academic integrity clearinghouse, which tracks all academic integrity violations that occur at MPCC. Records of academic integrity violations are maintained for two (2) years.

Course-Level Sanctions

These sanctions may be imposed by an instructor when a student has an academic integrity violation (or multiple violations) in the instructor's course. In addition to the sanctions below, the instructor will also educate the student on academic integrity, as well as how to avoid violations in the future.

- Written warning.
- Additional work to provide evidence of the student's academic performance and/or evidence that the student knows and understands the course material and/or academic integrity.
- Instructor of Record Mentoring for up to 10 hours.
- Lower or failing grade on assignment or examination.
- Course grade reduced to an "F" without option of withdrawal from course.

College-Level Sanctions

First Violation Reported to Clearinghouse

- No College-level sanction.

Second Violation Reported to Clearinghouse

- Student must complete self-guided academic integrity training via Canvas within 30 calendar days of notification of sanction.
 - Letter/notification from the Division Chair of the course that initiated the second report.
 - A Registration hold will be placed on the student's account if training is not completed by the deadline.
 - Academic Integrity Clearinghouse staff will mentor student during training period. Mentoring includes:

- Mentoring student regarding importance of training.
- Answering student questions.
- Reminding student to complete training by deadline.

Third Violation Reported to Clearinghouse

- Student is placed on academic probation.
 - Letter/notification from the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Fourth Violation Reported to Clearinghouse

- Student is placed on academic suspension.
 - Letter/notification from the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
 - The 12-month suspension period will begin at the end of the current term.

Fifth Violation Reported to Clearinghouse

- Student is expelled from the College.
 - Letter/notification from the President.

Process

The goal is to resolve any academic integrity violation (or alleged violation) between the course instructor and the student.

At any step in this process:

- The student has a right to a college employee advocate of their choice present. If the student does not have an advocate, the student may ask the course division chair to appoint one.
- The student may appeal decisions by following the steps outlined in the appeals process section below.

Step 1

The course instructor, based on their professional judgement, suspects a student of an academic integrity violation. **Timeline:** Instructors have **10 days** from due date or date of submission (whichever is later) to contact students regarding a potential violation.

- Course instructor compiles documentation in relation to the suspected violation.
- Course instructor contacts student through phone, email, or Canvas and arranges a meeting. **Timeline:** Students have **5 days** to respond to meeting requests.
 - Instructors must complete a minimum of three attempts to contact the student, encompassing at least two different forms of communication.
 - If student does not respond to the instructor's meeting request within 5 days, the student's agreement is assumed, and the process moves forward to step 2.

Step 2

Course instructor meets with student. The goal is for the instructor and student to resolve the issue in Step 2. **Timeline:** Instructor/Student meeting occurs within **5 days** of request.

- If the issue is resolved between the course instructor and student, and it is determined that no violation occurred the process is complete, and no further action is taken.
- If the student does not accept responsibility for the violation, the student may appeal following the appeal process listed below.
- If the student accepts responsibility for the violation:

- The course instructor reports the violation and course-level sanction to the clearinghouse. **Timeline:** Instructor reports violation to clearinghouse within **2 days**.
- Instructor provides the student a printed or email letter informing them of the course-level sanction.
 - The letter will also include information about college-level sanctions.
 - Instructor tells student to expect notification of college-level sanctions if they have had previous violations reported to the clearinghouse.

Step 3

If the student has had prior Academic Integrity Violations reported to the clearinghouse, the clearinghouse notifies the following. **Timeline:** Notification of college-level sanctions given to student within **5 days** of report to clearinghouse.

- Second report: Academic Dean of the course that initiated the second report.
- Third report: Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Fourth report: Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Fifth report: President

Each office listed above will then notify the student in writing of the college-level sanction to be imposed and ramifications of further violations.

Note: "Days" refer to instructional weekdays (Monday-Friday).

Appeal Process

To file an Academic Integrity Violation Appeal, the following steps must be completed in the order as described below:

Step 1

Within five (5) instructional weekdays following notification that an Academic Integrity Violation sanction the student must first consult with the instructor in an effort to provide a satisfactory resolution of the contested violation. If the instructor reviews the violation and evidence presented by the student, he/she may reverse the violation and sanctions. If the violation was previously reported to the clearinghouse, the instructor will notify the clearinghouse that the decision was reversed, and the instance will be removed from the student's record.

Step 2

If, however, the matter is not resolved in Step 1, the student may present the complaint in writing (e.g. email, written documentation, etc.) within five (5) instructional weekdays following the meeting with the instructor to the Academic Dean of the division in which the course was offered. Included in the petition are the appropriate documentation, and if available, the instructor's written explanation of the Academic Integrity Violation. The Academic Dean will attempt to resolve the complaint in consultation with the instructor and the student. The Academic Dean will provide a written response to the student (e.g. email) within ten (10) instructional weekdays after he/she received the written complaint. If the Academic Dean was the instructor of the course, the student may proceed directly to Step 3.

Step 3

If the complaint is not resolved at the division level, the student may appeal further by presenting a written petition to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, along with a copy of the materials presented at the

previous step and any written responses received from the program. The student's petition must be submitted within five (5) instructional weekdays following the Academic Dean's response. The Vice President for Academic Affairs may use any resources available to resolve the conflict and will provide the results of their finding in writing to the student within ten (10) instructional weekdays of the date the complaint was received by him/her.